

## INVEST IN PREVENTION

Spending \$1 today can make a dramatic impact on future health

Today's public expenditure on prevention is an investment in future health and productivity. Preventing illness and injury reduces not only suffering but also costs and the burden on the health care system. Instead of responding to illness by investing almost exclusively in radical new cures and expensive treatment institutions, health outcomes can be improved by preventing poor health before it occurs by employing and expanding proven prevention efforts. Bases on a review of published sources, here are a few examples:

	Every \$1 invested in:	Produces savings of:
Government	Water fluoridation	\$37.24 in communities with more than 20,000 people <sup>1</sup>
	High-quality preschool programs	\$16.41 from averted crime, remedial services, and child welfare services <sup>2</sup>
	Breastfeeding support by employers	\$3 in reduced absenteeism and health care costs for mothers and babies, and improved productivity <sup>3</sup>
	Women, Infants, and Children services	\$2.91 in Medicaid for newborn medical care <sup>4</sup>
Community	Child safety seats	\$41.52 in direct medical costs and other costs to society <sup>5</sup>
	Bicycle helmets	\$30 in direct medical costs and other costs to society <sup>6</sup>
	California Tobacco Control Program	\$50 in total personal health care spending <sup>7</sup>
	Walking and Biking Trails	\$2.60 in direct medical costs of physical inactivity <sup>8</sup>
	Physical activity programs for older adults	\$4.50 on hip fractures <sup>9</sup>
	Worksite wellness programs	\$15.60 in reduced absenteeism <sup>10</sup>
	Family and school based addiction prevention programs	\$10 in employer and community benefit <sup>11</sup>
Clinical	The 7-Vaccine routine childhood immunization schedule	\$16.50 in direct medical costs and other costs to society <sup>12</sup>
	The Chicken Pox vaccine	\$4.37 in direct medical costs and other costs to society <sup>13</sup>
	Screening and brief counseling interventions for alcohol misuse among pregnant women	\$4.30 in healthcare costs <sup>14</sup>
	Hospital needle stick prevention program	\$6.20 in medical and associated costs <sup>15</sup>
	Vaccinations for older adults	\$2.44 in hospitalization costs due to influenza <sup>16</sup>
	Hospital program (hand-washing promotion, education of staff) to prevent the spread of infection	\$6.00 in hospital medical costs <sup>17</sup>

**With \$17 invested in the prevention efforts listed above, a total of \$253.59 could be saved in health care and social service costs and lost productivity.**

- <sup>1</sup> Griffin, Susan O., Jones, Kari, & Tomar, Scott (2001). An Economic Evaluation of Community Water Fluoridation. *Journal of Public Health Dentistry*, 61(2), 78-86.
- <sup>2</sup> High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. (2005). . *The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study through Age 40*. Ypsilanti, MI: Schweinhart, L. J.
- <sup>3</sup> United States Breastfeeding Committee. (2002). *Workplace breastfeeding support*. Raleigh, NC.
- <sup>4</sup> Buescher, P.A., Larson, L.C., Nelson, M.D., Lenihan, A.J (1993). Prenatal WIC participation can reduce low birth weight and newborn medical costs: a cost-benefit analysis of WIC participation in North Carolina. *Journal of American Dietetic Association*, 93.
- <sup>5</sup> Children's Safety Network. (2005). *Child Safety Seats: How large are the benefits and who should pay?* Newton, MA.
- <sup>6</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2008). *Traffic Safety Facts*. Washington, DC.
- <sup>7</sup> Lightwood JM, Dinno A, Glantz SA (2008). *Effect of the California Tobacco Control Program on Personal Health Care Expenditures*. PLoS Med 5(8): e178. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0050178. Retrieved from <http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.0050178>
- <sup>8</sup> Guijing Wang, Caroline A. Macera, Barbara Scudder-Soucie, Tom Schmid, Michael Pratt, David Buchner, & Gregory Heath (2004). Cost Analysis of the Built Environment: The case of bike and pedestrian trails in Lincoln, Neb. *American Journal of Public Health*, 94(4), 549-553.
- <sup>9</sup> National Governors Association. *Healthy Aging and States: Making Wellness the Rule, Not the Exception*. Retrieved May 3, 2009 from <http://www.subnet.nga.org/ci/1-aging.html>.
- <sup>10</sup> Aldana SG, Merrill RM, Price K, Hardy A, Hager R (2005). Financial Impact of a Comprehensive Multisite Workplace Health Promotion Program. *Preventive Medicine* 40(2), 131-7.
- <sup>11</sup> Iowa State University News Service. (2009, January 20). ***ISU report to United Nations conference says drug prevention programs help the economy***, [Press release]. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University. Retrieved from <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~nscentral/news/2009/jan/prevention.shtml>.
- <sup>12</sup> Fangjun Zhou, Jeanne Santoli, Mark L. Messonnier, Hussain R. Yusuf, Abigail Shefer, Susan Y. Chu, Lance Rodewald, & Rafael Harpaz (2005). Economic Evaluation of the 7-Vaccine Routine Childhood Immunization Schedule in the United States, 2001. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 159(12).
- <sup>13</sup> Zhou, F, Ortega-Sanchez IR, Guris D, Shefer A, Lieu T, & Seward, JF (2008). An economic analysis of the universal varicella vaccination program in the United States. *Journal of Infectious Disease*, 1(197), S156-164.
- <sup>14</sup> Fleming MF, Mundt MP, French MT, Manwell LB, Stauffacher EA, & Barry KL (2002). Brief physician advice for problem alcohol drinkers: long-term efficacy and benefit-cost analysis. A randomized controlled trial in community-based primary care settings. *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 26, 36-43.
- <sup>15</sup> Hatcher, I. B.(2002). Reducing sharps injuries among health care workers: a sharps container quality improvement project. *Jt. Comm. J. Qual. Improv.* 28(7), 410-414.
- <sup>16</sup> Maciosek MV, Solberg LI, Coffield AB, Adwards NM, & Goodman MJ (2006). Influenza vaccination health impact and cost effectiveness among adults aged 50 to 64 and 65 and older. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 31(1), 72-29.
- <sup>17</sup> Macartney et. al. (2000). Nosocomial Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infections: The Cost-Effectiveness and Cost-Benefit of Infection Control. *Pediatrics*, 106(3), 520-526.